# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1023
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2016
Expansion of Telecom Services
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Government is aware that expansion of telecommunication services by the Government is going on at a snail"s pace and mobile network service is worse in the rural, backward and far-flung areas as compared to the urban areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to bring about improvement in the facilities of mobile and internet services in rural and less populated areas;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any telecommunication scheme has been implemented in the State of Rajasthan recently; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) The current level of rural and urban tele-density in the country is 49.82 and 152.57 respectively (as on 31.12.2015). The State-wise details are at Annexure I.

5,41,939 villages out of total 5,97,608 villages in the country are already covered with mobile services, leaving only 55,669 villages, i.e., 9.31%, without coverage. Since the demand of telecom services is price sensitive, the level of tele-density is also determined by the purchasing ability of the consumers. The increase in rural tele-density has gathered momentum in recent times but the wide gap between rural and urban tele-density can be explained by the difference in purchasing power of rural and urban consumers.

(c) & (d) Various schemes are being implemented/planned with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for expansion of mobile and internet services in rural and remote areas. Details of such schemes are as below:

(i) 7,317 Mobile towers have been installed with the financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) under the Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme in villages or cluster of villages having population of 2000 or more and not having mobile coverage. The infrastructure so created is capable of being shared by three service providers for provision of mobile services. The scheme was implemented during the period from June, 2007 to November, 2013.
(ii) 2199 mobile towers are being set up in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected States with a total estimated cost of Rs.3567.58 crore. 1431 sites are radiating as on 15.02.2016.
(iii) On 10.09.2014, the Government approved a proposal to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region (NER). The Project envisages to provide mobile coverage to 8621 identified uncovered villages by installation of about 6673 mobile towers, installation of 321 mobile tower sites along National Highways and strengthening of transmission network in the NER. The estimated cost of implementation is Rs. 5336.18 crore. The Project would be funded from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

(iv) Mobile coverage to balance uncovered villages has been planned to be provided in a phased manner, subject to availability of financial resources. Provision of mobile coverage Himalayan States, Border States, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Daman & Diu and Dadar & Nagar Haveli has been planned.
(v) The Rural Wireline Broadband Scheme was implemented to provide wire-line broadband connectivity to rural & remote areas. As on 31.01.2015, a total of 6,56,345 broadband connections have been provided and 15,671 kiosks have been set up in rural and remote areas.

(vi) BharatNet / National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) is planned to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of PSUs viz. BSNL, RailTel and Power Grid (and of any desirous private operator) and laying incremental fibre wherever necessary for providing Broadband connectivity. Under this project, upto 31.01.2016, 1,17,943 km of pipes and 89,020 km of optical fibre cables have been laid. Further, number of Gram Panchayats where OFC has been laid is 38,386.

(vii) USOF schemes for creation of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Infrastructure in North-East are being implemented to provide sufficient

back-haul capacity to integrate the voice and data traffic from the access network in the rural areas to their core network by strengthening the Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) infrastructure to provide for OFC network augmentation between the blocks" HQ and Districts" HQ in North-East. In Assam, the scheme is being implemented by BSNL. 308 nodes have been installed out of targeted 354 nodes. In NE-I (Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram)) the scheme is being implemented by M/s RailTel. 104 nodes out of targeted 188 nodes connected on OFC. In NE-II (Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland) the scheme is being implemented by M/s RailTel. 36 nodes out of targeted 407 nodes connected on OFC.

(e) & (f) In Rajasthan, following schemes are being implemented/planned with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for expansion of mobile and internet services:

(i) 403 Mobile towers have been installed in Rajasthan with the financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) under the Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme in villages or cluster of villages having population of 2000 or more and not having mobile coverage. The infrastructure so created is capable of being shared by three service providers for provision of mobile services. The scheme was implemented during the period from June, 2007 to November, 2013.

(ii) BharatNet / National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) is planned to connect all the 9,157 Gram Panchayats in Rajasthan through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of PSUs viz. BSNL, RailTel and Power Grid (and of any desirous private operator) and laying incremental fibre wherever necessary for providing Broadband connectivity. Under this project, as on 31.01.2016, 11,281 km of pipes and 10,065 km of optical fibre cables have been laid in Rajasthan. Further, number of Gram Panchayats in Rajasthan where OFC has been laid is 3,092.

Annexure-I
State-wise details of Rural and Urban Tele-density
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S.No. Service area Rural teledensity in % as on 31.12.2015. Urban teledensity in % as on 31.12.2015. Total teledensity in % as on 31.12.2015.
1 Andhra Pradesh 50.95 178.38 86.53
2 Assam 41.16 128.79 55.22
3 Bihar 35.09 161.70 52.55
4 Gujarat 64.74 143.25 97.58
5 Haryana 58.22 130.92 84.42
6 Himachal Pradesh 92.62 365.74 124.54
7 Jammu & Kashmir 57.40 134.42 78.84
8 Karnataka 53.27 179.76 102.33
9 Kerala 61.56 215.32 100.52
10 Madhya Pradesh 38.83 127.40 63.07
11 Maharashtra 62.14 123.88 84.50
12 North East 52.67 154.19 78.17
13 Odisha 46.51 154.97 65.69
14 Punjab 70.51 147.41 104.15
15 Rajasthan 57.13 161.06 82.24
16 Tamil Nadu 83.25 140.30 117.27
17 Uttar Pradesh (East) 40.67 140.58 63.51
18 Uttar Pradesh (West)
19 West Bengal 49.35 133.01 61.40
20 Kolkata # # 160.30
21 Delhi # # 240.93
22 Mumbai # # 149.45
All India Total 49.82 152.57 81.85
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